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Department of State TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-11

INFO OCT-01 SS-20 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 NSC-10 INR-06

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 SY-01 USSS-00 AID-12 O-03 L-02 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8000
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
USCINCSO/CANAL ZONE

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 5/16/77
PER F Dettmer OFFICE ARA
FADRC FOI CASE NO. 630873 Ronfeldt

S E C R E T MONTEVIDEO 1522

LIMDIS

CINCSO FOR POLAD

SUBJECT: MITRIONE KIDNAPPING - CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

1. A QUARTER HOUR CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN PEIRANO FACIO AT 0845 HOURS LOCAL TODAY (AUGUST 2) SERVED SEVERAL PURPOSES.

2. ACCOMPANIED BY TULL, I PRESENTED FORMAL NOTE FOR THE RECORD EXPRESSING OUR CONCERN, EXPECTATIONS, AND TRUST ON MITRIONE KIDNAPPING, ALL OF WHICH WAS REITERATION OF WHAT I HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED TO PEIRANO ORALLY. TEXT OF NOTE SEPTEL.

3. REFERRING TO MY SPECIAL CONCERN ABOUT MITRIONE'S HEALTH AT THIS MOMENT AND PEIRANO'S EARLIER INVITATION TO GIVE HIM ANY SUGGESTION WE MIGHT HAVE, I EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT POSSIBLE IMPASSE HAD DEVELOPED BETWEEN MLN KIDNAPPERS AND GOU, WITH MLN AWAITING INDICATION OF GOU POSITION ON ITS GENERAL WILLINGNESS TO RANSOM WHILE GOU EXPECTED FURTHER AND MORE PRECISE INFORMATION ON MLN DEMANDS. I ASKED FONMIN WHETHER GOU HAD CONSIDERED INDICATING WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE WITH KIDNAPPERS. FONMIN CONFIRMED THE GOU'S RELUCTANCE TO DATE TO REPLY TO

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"MLN NOTE" BECAUSE IT HAD NOT CONTAINED ANY SPECIFIC RANSOM DEMAND. HE NOTED THAT IN PREVIOUS KIDNAPPINGS BOTH IN URUGUAY AND BRAZIL, KIDNAPPERS MADE MORE DIRECT AND DEFINITE CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT. INDICATED THAT ABSENCE OF THIS TYPE DIRECT CONTACT HAS GOU PUZZLED. GOU DID NOT BELIEVE IT COULD RESPOND UNTIL CLEARER WHAT WAS BEING RESPONDED TO. THERE COULD BE

SOME REQUESTS THAT GOU COULD CONSIDER, WHILE OTHERS OBVIOUSLY IT COULD NOT, FOR INSTANCE, DEMAND FOR RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT. FONMIN THEN SAID THERE IS ANOTHER POSSIBILITY - GOU HAD HEARD RUMORS THAT MLN LOOKING FOR ANOTHER KIDNAP VICTIM IN ORDER TO GIVE IT MORE WITH WHICH TO BARGAIN. UNTIL GOU CLARIFIED WHAT EXACTLY WAS RANSOM SITUATION, IT FELT IT COULD NOT RESPOND.

4. NEXT, I REFERRED TO THIS MORNING'S RADIO REPORTS TO EFFECT THAT CABINET MINISTERS HAD MET WITH PRESIDENT YESTERDAY AND THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT NO CHANGE WOULD BE MADE IN GOVERNMENT'S PREVIOUS POLICY OF NO NEGOTIATIONS OR RANSOM. PEIRANO CONFIRMED THAT MINISTERS HAD MET WITH PRESIDENT, BUT SAID WE SHOULD NOT PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO SUCH RADIO REPORTS. HE SAID SEVERAL TIMES THAT IN VIEW OF FACT THAT NO SPECIFIC DEMAND HAD BEEN MADE, QUESTION OF RANSOM STILL UNDECIDED. IF, FOR EXAMPLE, RELEASE OF PRISONERS HELD UNDER EMERGENCY SECURITY MEASURES ("MEDIDAS PRONTAS DE SEGURIDAD") PREVIOUSLY DECREED BY PRESIDENT WAS DEMANDED, THAT WOULD BE ONE THING. BUT IF DEMAND WAS FOR PRISONERS ALREADY LEGALLY TRIED AND JAILED AND THEREFORE UNDER CONTROL OF JUDICIAL BRANCH, THERE WAS NO LAW WHICH WOULD ENABLE EXECUTIVE POWER TO RELEASE THEM. "WE WOULD HAVE TO PASS A NEW LAW." IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION BUT FONMIN SAID THAT "NO DOORS HAVE BEEN CLOSED."

5. RE QUESTION OF MITRIONE'S HEALTH, FONMIN SAID ONE PRESS ACCOUNT HAD RUMORS THAT MLN DOCTOR ATTENDING BRRAZILIAN CONSUL GOMIDE HAD BEEN TOUCH WITH SOMEONE (NOT NAMED, BUT POSSIBLY EMBASSY OR FAMILY). DOCTOR HAD INQUIRED ABOUT TYPE OF MEDICATION AND ATTENTION NEEDED BY GOMIDE. FONMIN THOUGHT IF THIS TRUE, EMBASSY MIGHT ALSO RECEIVE SIMILAR INQUIRY FROM KIDNAPPERS. HE AGAIN SAID PRESIDENT DETERMINED TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE AND NOTED THAT HE WAS TRYING AT THAT MOMENT TO TELEPHONE ASSISTANT SECRETARY MEYER IN NEW YORK TO ASSURE HIM PERSONALLY OF THIS.

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YM FINALLY, INDICATING MY RELECTANCE TO BRING UP RUMORS, I SAID THAT THERE WAS ADDITIONAL MATTER THAT I FELT OBLIGED TO MENTION PERSONALLY TO FONMIN. I SAID I WAS CONCERNED WITH RUMORS I HAD HEARD THAT WITHIN POLICE, THERE WAS SOME FEELING THAT IN FACT, EVERYTHING POSSIBLE IS NOT REPT NOT BEING DONE. I SAID ONE SUCH RUMOR HAD POLICE OFFICER SAYING THAT HE WAS "AFRAID" TO FIND MITRIONE, WHILE ANOTHER SAID THAT SOME POLICE HAD BEEN TOLD TO GO EASY BECAUSE "PODRIA LASTIMAR A ALGUIEN." I TOLD FONMIN I FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE SUCH RUMORS, BUT FELT DUTY-BOUND TO DISCUSS THEM WITH HIM. FONMIN SAID HE WOULD REPORT THIS TO PRESIDENT PACHECO, NOTING THAT ONE OF MAIN PROBLEMS WAS EXISTENCE OF SO MANY CONFLICTING RUMORS; EACH ONE MUST BE TRACKED DOWN AND CHECKED. BUT THIS WAS DIFFICULT. HOWEVER, HE WAS IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT THAT HE AND I MUST FEEL FREE TO TALK ABOUT ANYTHING AND EXCHANGE OPINIONS ON EVEN THESE MATTERS.

7. IN CLOSING, I INDICATED TO FONMIN MY DESIRE TO CALL ON PRESIDENT TODAY TO GO OVER SAME GENERAL GROUND AS ABOVE. FONMIN REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD CAUSE HIM NO PROBLEM AND THAT WE SHOULD GO AHEAD AND REQUEST APPOINTMENT. I AM NOW AWAITING WORD FROM PRESIDENT'S OFFICE ON WHETHER HE WILL BE ABLE TO SEE ME THIS AFTERNOON.
ADAIR